



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Henry J. Mroz Central Administration Offices
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA 01852

Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D
Superintendent

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To: Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools
From: Dr. James Hall, Chief Operating Officer
Date: September 9, 2021
Re: ESSER spending- Facilities Subcommittee

I request that the School Committee discuss how it wishes to address Facilities proposals for ESSER spending.

We are required to submit a form with the final quote for any project that would be considered a capital expense over \$30,000.00 (see enclosure). This includes equipment, new construction, remodeling, renovations, alterations, and repairs.

The current amount available for ESSER spending is \$15,203,840.

I recommend that the Facilities team make initial recommendations after collaboration with City officials and that the Facilities Subcommittee address these recommendations by the last week of September so that the School Committee can take action at its first meeting in October.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

*Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief
Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)*

Equipment and Capital Expenditures Request for Approval

For Proposed Capital Expenditures of \$30,000 or More

The CARES Act, CRRSA Act, and ARPA provide that the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER I, II & III*) Funds are subject to the Uniform Grants Guidance (2 CFR 200), which requires that capital expenditures and certain equipment have prior written approval from DESE. 2 CFR 200.439. In addition, the CRRSA Act/ARPA expressly added certain capital/equipment purchases (school facilities improvements related to environmental health and air quality) that are allowable using ESSER II & III funds (although all activities allowable for ESSER II and III are also allowable under CARES Act/ESSER I).

This form is required for prior approval of all capital expenditures or equipment of **\$30,000** or more. Capital expenditures are defined in the Uniform Guidance as “expenditures to acquire capital assets or expenditures to make additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life.” 2 CFR 200.1. Equipment is defined as “tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000.” *Id.* Capital expenditures of less than \$30,000 will continue to be approved as part of your grant application workbook budgets.

By submitting this request, you are assuring that the authorized use-of-funds criteria for ESSER I, II, and III Funds have been met. Particularly, you are agreeing to review and follow all local, state, and federal policies and regulations when making a purchase using these federal funds, including federal and state procurement requirements that may be tied to certain dollar thresholds, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317-326, and Massachusetts procurement standards (see Massachusetts Inspector General’s public procurement webpages and chart summarizing procurement requirements), as applicable. In addition, to the extent your projected expenditure includes construction and/or renovation, you will follow the requirements set forth in 34 CFR 76.600, as well as the regulations that may relate to your project, including, but are not limited to, 2 CFR 200.311 (real property) and 2 CFR 200.449 (financing costs), and 521 CMR 3.3.2 (MA regulations: accessibility triggered by improvements exceeding 30% of the “full and fair cash value” of the building).

Districts are advised to consult with municipal staff with regulatory expertise in these areas.

Along with this form, please email to your district’s DESE federal grants liaison:

- 1) A final, accepted bid or contract of the expenses to be funded with ESSER funds, and/or
- 2) If you do not have a final bid or contract, or if your proposed expenditure is \$100,000 or more, please submit your procurement policy with this form.

For those without a final bid, your proposed expense will be provisionally approved, assuming satisfactory responses in this form, subject to submission of a final bid once procurement has been completed. **Capital Expenditure forms must be approved in order to approve your grant budget. All approvals are subject to further monitoring by DESE.**

*This form uses “ESSER II” for CRRSA Act funds and “ESSER III” for ARPA funds to differentiate from the ESSER funds of CARES Act (ESSER I).

Please provide full and complete answers to the following by typing where indicated (boxes expand as you type):

1. Date of Request: 6/7/21
2. District Name: Lowell Public Schools
3. Name of Primary Contact: Robin Desmond
4. Title: Chief Academic Officer
5. Email Address: rdesmond@lowell.k12.ma.us
6. Phone Number: 978-674-4323
7. Short Title of Project/Expenditure Name: Student Chromebooks
8. Funding Source(s) Used: ESSER II
9. Estimated Total Cost of the Project: \$1,094,070
10. Amount of Total Cost that will be paid with ESSER I funds: 0.00
11. Amount of Total Cost that will be paid with ESSER II funds: \$1,094,070
12. Amount of Total Cost that will be paid with ESSER III funds*: 0.00
13. Name of district/town Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) or designee involved in the project/expenditure (required): P. Michael Vaughn
14. Does the CPO or designee have a Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Office (MCPPO) designation from the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General? Yes
15. Please describe the capital expenditure/construction that will be funded with ESSER I, II and/or III funds: Purchase Chromebooks to replace lost or broken units and new units for incoming students.
16. The federal procurement standards require, among other things, that districts conduct an analysis of "lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach." 2 CFR §200.318(d). Please explain, briefly, how the proposed expenditure represents the most economic approach for your district:

Explain how these expenditures represent the most economical approach
17. Was this expenditure part of any district/school facilities or capital plan in existence on or before March 13, 2020? No

18. Please describe which of the allowable uses of ESSER I, II and/or III funds apply to these expenditures and how they are related to the impact of COVID-19: Operations: to address on-going planning, coordinating, and provision of services related to COVID-19. Educational technology - hardware.
19. Please describe how this expense is reasonable and necessary. (2 CFR 200.404-405): Due to the pandemic and remote learning, LPS had to purchase 1 to 1 devices for all students. It is necessary to have additional devices to in order to maintain the level of learning as well as to be prepared for any future possible similar situations.
20. Are you providing a final bid or contract that has been obtained through a procurement process?
No, we are providing a quote using a MA State contract approved vendor
If you are not including a final bid/contract, please provide a copy of your procurement policy along with this form to your DESE liaison.

Signature of Superintendent or Charter School Leader:

Name of Superintendent or Charter School Leader: Dr. Joel Boyd

Date: 6/7/2021

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**Note that if you include ESSER III funds prior to availability of ESSER III applications, these funds may be approved as part of your project provisionally, contingent on submission and approval of your ESSER III grant application, including meeting all required set-aside and maintenance of equity requirements.*